

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1 Claim 1. (*Currently Amended*) A method for charging a fee for use of network resources,
2 which can be made use of between a network resource provider system providing the network
3 resources and an information provider terminal providing information by using said network
4 resources,
5 wherein when said network resource provider system charges one information provider
6 terminal a fee for use of basic network resources allotted thereto, said network resource provider
7 system sells said one information provider terminal at least one of a preferential option at a
8 premium rate and a non-preferential option at a discount rate, said preferential option enabling
9 said one information provider terminal to use a part of the basic network resources or its entirety
10 thereof allotted to another information provider terminal, said non-preferential option enabling
11 another information provider terminal to use a part of the basic network resources or its entirety
12 thereof allotted to said one information provider terminal, and said fee corresponding to said
13 premium rate associated with said preferential option and said discount rate associated with said
14 non-preferential option, and said fee being calculated in accordance with said at least one of a
15 preferential option or a non-preferential option selected by said one information provider
16 terminal.

1 Claim 2. (*Previously Presented*) A method for charging a fee for the use of network
2 resources as claimed in claim 1, wherein said preferential option and said non-preferential option
3 are determined on a basis of a time zone and an amount of network resources, and said premium
4 rate and said discount rate are determined based on the time zone and the amount of network
5 resources of said preferential option and said non-preferential option.

1 Claim 3. (*Currently Amended*) A method for allotting basic network resources supplied
2 by a network resource provider system to one information provider terminal using said network
3 resources, said method comprising the steps:

4 (a) said one information provider terminal purchases basic network resources from said
5 network resource provider system;

6 (b) said one information provider terminal pays a fee for an optional condition with
7 regard to said basic network resources, said optional condition being at least one of a preferential
8 option at a premium rate and a non-preferential option at a discount rate, said preferential option
9 enabling said one information provider terminal to use a part of the basic network resources or its
10 entirety thereof allotted to another information provider terminal, said non-preferential option
11 enabling the other information provider terminal to use a part of the basic network resources or
12 its entirety thereof allotted to said one information provider terminal, ~~and~~ said fee corresponding
13 to said premium rate associated with said preferential option and said discount rate associated

14 with said non-preferential option, and said fee being calculated in accordance with said optional
15 condition selected by said one information provider terminal; and

16 (c) said network resource provider system allots said basic network resources to said one
17 information provider terminal according to said basic network resources and said optional
18 condition as well.

Claim 4 (*Canceled*)

1 Claim 5. (*Previously Presented*) A method for allotting the network resources as claimed
2 in claim 3, wherein said preferential option and said non-preferential option may be determined
3 on a basis of a time zone and on an amount of network resources.

1 Claim 6. (*Previously Presented*) A method for allotting the network resources as claimed
2 in claim 3, wherein said step (c) further includes the steps:

3 (c1) said network resource provider system judges a state of the basic network resources
4 at said one information provider terminal when sold said preferential option;

5 (c2) when a status of the network resource for said one information provider terminal
6 when sold the preferential option exceeds a predetermined ratio, said network resource provider
7 system allots a part of the basic network resources or its entirety thereof purchased by other

8 information provider terminals that are sold the non-preferential option, to said one information
9 provider terminal; and

10 (c3) when the status of said one information provider terminal purchasing the preferential
11 option no longer uses said basic network resources exceeding a predetermined ratio after having
12 allotted the network resources in said step (c2), said network resource provider system releases
13 the allotment of the basic network resources in said step (c2).

1 Claim 7. (*Currently Amended*) A system for allotting basic network resources, said
2 system including a network resource provider system providing the basic network resources and
3 a plurality of information provider terminals providing information, wherein said network
4 resource provider system comprises:

5 means for selling a basic network resource to said information provider terminals and
6 selling an optional condition for a fee to said basic network resource information provider
7 terminals, said optional condition being at least one of a preferential option at a premium rate
8 and a non-preferential option at a discount rate, said preferential option enabling one information
9 provider terminal to use a part of the basic network resources or its entirety thereof allotted to
10 another information provider terminal, said non-preferential option enabling the other
11 information provider terminal to use a part of the basic network resources or its entirety thereof
12 allotted to said one information provider terminal, and said fee corresponding to said premium
13 rate associated with said preferential option and said discount rate associated with said

14 non-preferential option, and said fee being calculated in accordance with said optional condition
15 selected by said plurality of information provider terminals;
16 memory means for storing said basic network resources allotted to and said optional
17 condition selected by each of said information provider terminals and said optional condition as
18 well; and
19 a network resource control means for controlling the allotment of said network resources
20 to each of said information provider terminals with reference to said memory means, and judging
21 said optional condition selected by each of said information provider terminals.

Claim 8 (*Canceled*)

1 Claim 9. (*Previously Presented*) A system for allotting basic network resources as
2 claimed in claim 7, wherein said preferential option and said non-preferential option may be
3 determined on the basis of a time zone and on an amount of basic network resources.

1 Claim 10. (*Previously Presented*) A system for allotting basic network resources as
2 claimed in claim 7, further comprising:
3 a monitoring means for monitoring a status of the basic network resources at said
4 plurality of information provider terminals, wherein said network resource control means

5 controls an allotment of said basic network resources to each of said plurality of information
6 provider terminals based on the monitoring result.

1 Claim 11. (*Previously Presented*) A system for allotting basic network resources as
2 claimed in claim 10,

3 wherein when said network resource control means judges that a status of the basic
4 network resources for said one information provider terminal when sold the preferential option
5 exceeds a predetermined ratio, said network resource control means allots a part of the basic
6 network resources or its entirety thereof that are purchased by other information provider
7 terminals when sold the non-preferential option, to said one information provider terminal; and

8 when a status of said one information provider terminal when sold the preferential option
9 no longer uses said basic network resources exceeding a predetermined ratio after having allotted
10 the network resources to said information provider terminal, said network control means releases
11 the allotment of the basic network resources to said one information provider terminal.